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£KUWAIT: @CIVILIANS AT RISK FROM REPRISALS
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FEARS TORTURE AND EXECUTIONS

Amnesty International today issued a public appeal for the protection of Palestinians, Sudanese, Iraqis and others in Kuwait now at risk of reprisal killings and other human rights violations in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

"We have received reports that scores of Palestinians, as well as Sudanese and Egyptian nationals, have been arrested in the past few days during house-to-house searches by armed groups of Kuwaiti civilians in control of parts of Kuwait City," the organization said. "Others have been abducted off the street."

Most of those detained are people suspected of having cooperated with Iraqi forces since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last August. A small number of Iraqi military personnel and civilians have also reportedly been apprehended and detained by armed Kuwaiti civilians since the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from the country.

"Although the precise number and whereabouts of these detainees is unknown, we have grave fears for their safety," Amnesty International said.

The organization warned that present and future detainees were at risk of torture or summary executions during the present instability in the country.

According to one eye-witness account, a Sudanese national was publicly executed and his wife raped by armed Kuwaitis. Several eye-witnesses have also reported seeing Palestinians detained at checkpoints and beaten by both armed Kuwaiti civilians as well as members of Kuwait's regular army.

"This is a direct public appeal to all parties with effective authority in Kuwait to desist from or prevent reprisal killings and the torture or execution of any detainees," Amnesty International said.

All parties should allow the International Committee of the Red Cross unhindered access to places where detainees are being held.

"Governments with military forces in Kuwait should also do all they can to ensure international humanitarian and human rights principles are observed throughout the country."

Amnesty International has also reiterated its appeal to the Iraqi Government to ensure the humane treatment of all Kuwaiti and other detainees in its custody since 2 August, and to facilitate their speedy release.

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